TAPE NO. 3

TAPE INDEX

NARRATOR W.G.(Bob) Doran

INTERVIEWER Phyllis Lotz

PLACE 1450 Dove Meadow Dr.
(Doran's Home)

DATE February 28, 1979

TRANSCRIPT PAGE NO.	TAPE COUNTER	SUBJECT	NAMES
1	004	Life Magazine, Ride of the 30's	
1	010	Fred Stone, Santa Monica, Douglas Aircraft	
1	016	"Los Charros", 1948	
2	050	Joining	
2	052	One camp of Rancheros, 1949	
2		May 1950,1st year guest	
	056	Camps, 15, objects	
2	070	500, 1950	
2	075	Tents,washstands, etc.	
2	085	The Ride, 1st weekend in May	
2	100	8 days	
2	275	Different rides	
6	286	The horses	
7	320	Harvey McDonald	
7	336	Different men on the rides	
7	344	How a man join	
7	395	Maverick Camp	
	408	End of 1st side	
	411	Start	
8	415	"Horsenda", John Mitchell	
8	443	Musicians	
8	450	Jack Watson	
8	462	John Boyle	
8	471	"Open House"	
	480	1979	
9	492	Commissary,field kitchen	
9	521	Given the Horseshoe	
9	538	Richardson home, learns to tie calf	
	542	Prizes	
10	555	Serves on committee as judge	
10	580	Parades	
10	611	Janeway and San Marcos Camps	
10	633	Amusing experiences	
10	650	Photographers on rides	
10	679	Ranchers 25 year book	
11	707	History of the Rancheros	
11	790	The weather	
12	812	End of tape	
	Tape 11		
12	019	Weather, 1978	
12	028	Only postponed ride	
12	040	Stewart Abercrombie	
12	046	The loss of Scofield Ranch, Rattlesnake Canyon	
12	053	Tejiguas Ranch	
12	062	Stages on steep rides	
12	071	El Capitan, Juan y Lolita Ranch	

over

12	077	Weather that ride
12	082	Bad weather for three years
13	088	Rancheros Book
13	092	Colorful Parades
13	098	Pete Jackson
13	112	"Empty Saddles"
13	125	Plans for the future
	end	

Interview with Whitney G."Bob" Doran, Interview 1
Date of Interview: 28 Feb. 1979; Solvang, California
Interviewer: Phyllis Lotz
Transcriber: Phyllis Lotz
Begin Tape 1, Side 1

Doran: My first knowledge of the Rancheros was in LIFE magazine, early in its lifetime of one of its early rides in the '30's. I remember one of the pictures of the rolling hillsides and another picture around the campfire. One picture was of Fred Stone, the famous actor of that time. I remember then that I wanted to be a Ranchero myself. I did not own a horse at that time although I had ridden where I was brought up in Western Canada. We were living in Santa Monica then and I was working for the Douglas Aircraft Company. It now seems very remote as I remember this. Ultimately I did join. I first became aquainted with an organization known as Los Charros and some of the men who were members of Los Charros kept horses on Havenhurst Ave. in Encino, at that time run by Gordon Murphy. We had acquired property, I had married my wife, Nympha and our two children were living on Balboa Blvd. On the next street east of Havenhurst I could ride right through to the stable and Mr. Tex Talbert and Mr. Fernando Courtwright, who at that time ran the Beverly Hills Hotel, Talbert was a Beverly Hills insurance man rode with us. Another one was Bud Pozo whose brother was a big contractor in Los Angeles. Another man who rode with us occasionaly was Ed Pauley who had a big Tennessee walking horse. We would ride along Burbank Blvd. that at that time was a dirt road, up Encino Ave. to Dr. John Yarbourgh's place. Dr. Yarbourgh and the rest of us rode back up into the Santa Monica Mts. on a pleasant Sunday Morning. There was an amusing thing about this; Mr. Talbert had a very booming voice, Bud Pozo was hard of hearing, Fernando Cartwright was hard of hearing and I am hard of hearing. Because we had

to ride single file along the road John Yarbourgh would say that his children could hear us deaf mutes coming and run ahead to open the gate before we got there so we could ride in to meet him.

PL: What year was this?

Doran: This was in 1948 and I was invited to join the Charros by Mr. Talbert. So the next spring I did indeed join the Charros. Only to learn that the Charros was one of the many camps of the Rancheros. It did not mean much to me at the time but in the May of 1950 I made my first Ranchero ride as a first year guest at Los Charros camp. I found out what it meant by camp. There are about 15 different camps in Los Rancheros each with a Spanish name for the most part. Los Gringos, the Mitchell camp, Los Barochos, Los Chincadores, Los, Posos, Los Postados, Los Picadores, Los Charros, and so on. The object of this is to break up the members into groups for better utilization of the area. If we had one picket line for all members it would reach to Market Street. So each camp had its own picket line and there were about 500 people in camp between members and guests, on the ride and they came from all over the country 38 states are usually represented and I remember one man came from Canada, several from Mexico and one man from Australia. Each camp also provides whatever facilities it choses for its convienence. Los Charros that year acquired a group of two man tents so we could accomodate 30 people in these two man tents. For a wash basin we had a thing made out of pipe with two kitchen sinks and the hose bib which we could attach a garden hose. There were faucets on these wash basins which we used for wahing our faces and shaving in the realy morning with cold water. We have come a long way since then. The camps had showers provided by the Rancheros and we used these. None of the camps yet have their own showers. We rode Saturday afternoon, and incidentally the rides

always start the first Saturday in May and they had been going on soke 20 years before that in the early days of Mr. Mitchell and Elmer Awl and a few of the men who rode through the Santa Ynez Valley and got the organization going. It grew by leaps and bounds the first years. I read somewhere that they had 100 men the second year. It has been a stag affair since the very beginning and will remain so. After
After my first trip I told my wife about the things that went on and she had before the ride felt left out but after I told her how the men treated each other, the camaraderie, she felt she did not belong.

PL: How many days is the usual ride?

Doran: The rides are 8 days duration. Started on Saturday at noon with flag raising, a little ceremony around the flag. In the afternoon we got our clean shirts on and rode to Santa Barbara Mission. We were camped in what is known as Rattlesnake Canyon on the Skofield Ranch about three miles from the Mission. After the ceremony at Mission Santa Barbara where the padres blessed us we rode back to camp for dinner and I might add that each camp has its won bar. And of course all the fun and frolic of the organization is going from camp to camp and bending elbows in each others camp. There was remarkably little drunkeness but occasionally someone gets a little over the hill. For the most part they handle their horses as well as they handle their liquor.

The next day we started up Rattlesnake Canyon which is a 7 mile climb to the El Cielo Road which was a dirt road at that time, and had a lunch stop where a long table was stretched along some pine trees. We tied the horses to a line between the pines and lunch was brought in by wagon. Bread and ham, coffee and beer, of course. On this first morning ride there was no beer as it was not convienent to have a beer stop as the trail was steep. The beer wagon was driven by Ernie Righetti with six big white mules

on an old-time beer wagon. In the bed of the wagon he had a water trough full of ice, beer and soft drinks. As the trek went on the wagon would meet us at mid-morning and at mid-afternoon. The wagon would travel by road while we rode by trail. We would meet at some re-arranged place and there would be a sign,"Beer Stop." After lunch on that first day we rode along Cielo about three miles then drop down into a canyon that the name excapes me, but a very pretty ride with a stream running through it, to the 4H camp whihc is still there. After dinner and a good nights rest we saddled up again and rode down the river to what was known as the Red Corrals and then we turned inland to Santa Cruz Canyon, about 9 miles and we stayed there all the next day and to the following morning. While there we ran off some horse races and camp races and a horse show, and trap shooting. Then on to Juan y Lolita, the Mitchell's place with a lunch stop between.

The Juan y Lolita was our final destination. The camps were spread around the buildings of the ranch. The big barn was known as The Barn. It had an old fashioned mahogany bar in it as well as some wagons and rigs and a concrete floor. Over the bar were innumerable horse shoes tacked to it and as a rider became a member he was given a horse shoe with his name on ti and it was tacked to the roof.

At Juan y Loleta we rode out Thursday morning to the Alisal Ranch and back to camp. Friday morning we had a rodeo with Monty Montana officiating as head of the committee. There are no bucking broncs or bull riding, this is for members of the organization who are business men and not professionals. They just love to ride. The events were sack roping; a line of sacks to be roped and dragged back to the finish line. This event is run off over and over as many find it encouraging and want to try. Then there were the calf tieing contest where you tie a ribbon on the tail of a calf. The calf comes out of the

ahoot with a rope on it already but you have to try to tie a ribbon on its tail. Its hilarious as most of these men have never done this and it provides alot of fun and frolic and one can't get seriously hurt. There was a event called the wild cow milking. When I started with the rides they did use wild cows off the range and they gave some of the fellows a bad time. The idea here is to have three men on a team, one ropes the cow, one holds its nose and twists its head to hold it, and the third man has to squeeze enough mild out of the cow into a coke bottle, so as to show at least one drop to the judge. Now these wild cows gave the fellows a bad time so in recent years they used dairy cows but they too gave the men a bad time, uncooperative animals. Another event is the tire race. A line to tires sit at the other end of the arean. You race down there, get off your horse, slide throught all the tires, get back on your horse and head for the finish line. This provides alot of fun as the horses spook at the tires and will run off, or a man is too heavy to get through the tires so it's fun. One point I missed telling you about the wild cow milking contest, sometimes those in cahrge would run a steer in there, the three men not knowing it was a steer would have some trouble getting a drop of milk!

Then there are some events for the more experienced riders, calf roping contest against time. Over the years there has been a marked improvement in the abilities of the men in these events. Not wanting to become professionals but for the love of it. There have been quite a few business men who have become good ropers. One of our old camp members was a medical doctor who became a very good roper. A young fellow who was an electrical contractor who became a capable roper. We had two men who had been on the rodeo circut who were good ropers.

These are then the final events and the rodeo would

last all morning and Friday after we would ride to the Mission Santa Ines to get unblessed. A little ceremony and then back to camp and that night have a pretty good camp show. During the week there was a talent show made up of talent that came from the camps, sometimes a good show and always alot of fun. The big show on Friday night brought in professional talent. We had Bob Hope there one time as I recall, always a good show. Then the last is an "empty saddles" ceremony where we all stand up and face the west with an empty saddle on the stage and the speaker names off those who have gone on riding to their last roundup, the year before.

The ride lasted a week and was the greatest week of my life. I vowed that come hell or high water, I would make the next one. And that was thirty years ago and I missed one in all those years. I missed one in 1968 because that was the year I retired in April and it seemed the best time to get away. The weather conditions around the world were not too good so I missed that one ride.

PL: I would like to ask about your horse, was a horse able to make this trek without any trouble?

Doran: I"m glad you asked that because the horse is a very important part of the ride. And to answer your question, yes, the rider would have gotten the horse in condition around his home or where he keeps the horse at the stable. Those men ride often and I've kept horses at home and exercised them and put alot of miles on the horse, admittedly mostly on weekends but kept them in good condition. Yes, your horse can make all the difference. There has been a remarkable difference in the caliber of the horses in the last few years on the ride. The early rides had some of the horses pretty rangy animals but with the growth and popularity of the quarter horse a remarkable improvement in quality and conformation on the ride has occured. Not all ride quarter horses, some ride Arab-

ians, there are a few Tennessee walking horses, the occasional Thoroughbred and alot of cross bred horses. Many of the men who come from the east have rental horses and it was Harvey McDonald who was responcibility for years to get horses from these ranches for the men. Two or three hundred strong, a reliable horse that has had alot of hard work on the ranches.

PL: How about the men, are they able to hold up through the seven day ride?

Doran: Someone will drop out of the organization because he finds it too strenuous, one or two. First of all it is an invitational affair. You can't say I want to be a Ranchero. You have to have a sponsor and two seconds. You give all the information; age, health, and this is all brought to the office and you go on a membership committee. The formula they apply is over 25 and under 40, the distance you live: the farther away you live the better change, oddly enough for membership as they want a cross section of members. There are other elements but I can't tell you all of them. There is a point system. About 12 or 14 years ago the growth of the camps became a concern to the directors. Each camp has a board of directors. We select officers. The president of the directors is Captain of Camp, a two year term. Most of them go for longer. Tow or three times a year the Rancheros call all captains to a meeting and the rides are discussed. This matter of membership came up and it was decided to organize a Maverick Camp and now for the last 7 years the new guest goes to the Maverick Camp. This is for the first year men. And usually a board member goes along. The first captain was Stewart Abercrombie, then John Newman, Dick Danielson and now Clark Myers.

End of Side 1

The object of this is that on the Thursday ride they go into their sponsors camp. They have been together and got aquainted and will always remember the other Mavericks from the other camps. This gives a bond of friendship that makes for a better association,

and it works out splendidly. It has been a real benefit to the Rancheros.
The Maverick Camp functions by itself, manages by itself. They have a fine time.
We could go on and talk about the events of the ride but you have to experience it.
When Jack Mitchell had the Horsenda, as we called it, up the river there, where Harvey McDonald lives now, on a Thursday ride throught the Alisal, we would have lunch back in the hills. We would ride to the Horsenda coming down a rather steep hill zig,zag and they would stretch out a picket line and if there were any wives in Solvang they were invited there in the afternoon and Mrs. Jack Mitchell would have a Vodka Party,she being a Russian. Vodka was her little national touch. Then the men would go back to camp. Sometimes there would be a little entertainment there and one time Curly Brown gave a little talk all in the Hawaiian dialect, all very amusing. Another time Monty Montana brought in one of his paint horses with special shoes and put on his rope tricks. I mentioned the musicians and I forgot to say there was always roving musicians and also a band made up of members who would play for the rodeo, the Star Spangled Banner, and several groups came up to join the Rancheros. There was one man in earlier time, a man named Jack Watson who did not have the most melodious voice but he made up for it with enthusiasm. He sang and played and had the stamina to play and sing as long as people stayed up to listen. He was a character. Sometimes, later, he will show up for a day or two and the old timers swarm around ime with tears in their eyes, something to see. Another man was Johnny Boyle, who was a musician for the Picadores. He had a little more refined voice and songs. Some of the camps have an open house affair. We had one we used to go into Santa Cruz Canyon on a Tuesday, we would have open house for everyone after the races. The Rancheros

musicians would play. The Picadores have a big party and we have a big party and others. These parties are open house affairs and you may not see these men at other times, because there are so many members. There were 500 when I first rode and now the roster has 750 names and first year guests. So all together it is a big group plus the wranglers and other help.

It becomes a big problem of logistics. The food is all probably contracted, the same one serves for many years. They set up a field kitchen and in the permanent camps there is a concret slab for tables and you go down the line and pick up your food if you are in camp. At breakfast there are eggs, ham, biscuits, fruit, coffee, lunch has cold cuts, hot food and is served on long tables wherever you are. There is a bar at the lunch stop for those who want a beer or something stronger but I want to emphasize that it is not one big drunk everyday. I have heard the Rancheros referred to as the Whiskeydores and I don't think it's a fitting title. There is drinking but not drunkeness. Pretty fine type of fellows.

When you get to be a member you get a horseshoe which used to be put in the big barn, but since Jack Mitchell sold first to Jimmy Stewart they lost all those buildings up there. I never nailed my shoe there I brought it home and most of the fellows do that now.

I was a contestant in earlier events, the balloon busting. They had a thing called the camp captain's calf tieing, where a calf came out on a rope and you went down the rope to tie the calf. One man I knew kept some steers in his back yard so I went over and learned how to tie a calf right. For two years I managed to win the calf tieing contest. And I won some other things. The balloon busting, one time, alot of luck.

I had a little black gelding that I rode for several years, well managed that I showed for years. The last two years I have served on Monty Montana's entertainment committee which takes several people to make it

funtion so I get out at the other end of the arena on horseback and when someone is in the contest I am a judge. One other event is called the key hole race. We make a key hole on the ground. They end in a circle and through the lines and back to the beginning, a-gaist time. I help make the key hole. I have served in that capacity and enjoyed it. All morning you are out there helping.

In recent years we have had a grand entry parade. Some of the camps go to alot of work for the grand parade, but always alot of talant. That goes in first, then the riders depending on what is going to happen. There is a judge's stand and Frank Bogart does all the announcing, has for years and Mat Davis is one of the timers. The Rancheros have different chairman for all these committees so that the ride will go off with dispatch. It's an amusing thing to watch it all come together and the spirit of it.

For sometime we have not gone into Santa Cruz Canyon nor for a long time to Santa Barbara. Now our route starts at the Jackson Camp, a piece of the Alisal and we bought the Janeway Ranch as a permanent camp at the San Marcos. The rodeo is there and some of the rides are out of there. The horse show is at the San Marcos.

One time we were getting ready to cross from San Marcos to Santa Cruz Canyon with just the clothers on your back and this little buckskin I was riding just took a notion to lie down in the water. Well there are always photographers on the ride and there I was, down in the water and I was soaking wet. Had to dry out at the over night camp, I hung the chaps out but I was afraid to take my boots off.

As I mentioned to you, they are trying to put out a second book on the Rancheros as they have for the first 25 years. This one will be dedicated to J.J. Mitchell as president for 1930 to 1955.

PL: How did the Rancheros Visitadores begin?

Doran: I wasn't there but I can give you a little background.

Ed Borein, Elmer Awl, and J.J. Mitchell were the first to ride. Jack Mitchell had the ranch, the Juan y Lolita , he and Dwight Murphy, Scofield, and the others made a ride from Murphy's ranch to San Marcos and on to the Juan y Lolita and this was a ride all in one day but it was a very long ride. There are some historical notes in this book. John Mitchell got the idea in the first place at the Bohemian Club in San Francisco. Ed Borein was living in Santa Barbara. They went on the first ride with about 100 riders. I think we can say they have been highly successful. One of their songs speaks of the E.W. Alexander Ranch. Fred Bixby was one of the originals, Wilson Dibblee, Jack Crawford, Ted Chamberlin, Bob Cooper, Eddie Fields, he won the George O'Brian Outstanding Horsemans Award. Max Fleishmann, Hollisters, Captain Hancock, Ray Scofield, Harry Sloan, and Herberty Wylie are some of the men mentioned here in 1931.
We've had some things develop because of weather. One year we got rained out in Santa Cruz Canyon, we were there for 3 or 4 days (we had always said we wanted to spend more time there) but not in the rain. Rained in Santa Barbara but only one day. It poured for 2 days. In the grassy hills it is not too bad. Plunge off down the hillside and was pretty good footing. Fortunately we did not hit any bogs.

PL: You mentioned you were rained out on one occasion, in a case like that do you still accomplish the seven day ride?

Doran: Yes, we always got it accomplished because we ran off races in the mud and eliminated the horse show that time but we did race at Santa Cruz. But you remember we did have a very wet winter here two years ago and that year we had to postpone the ride. We did not ride to San Marcos, we trailed our horses. When we got there we managed althought it was still pretty wet to get the arena worked up and put on a team penning event and carried on as usual. That was the only time I remember that we did not ride because of weather.

We've been held up for 24 hours, you see these major events take only a half a day so we have no big hardship. Right after we left the Juan y Lolita, Stewart Abercrombie had a ranch on the coast called the Tajiguas which means Basket in Chumash, and he offered the Rancheros the use of that ranch for the next 2 or 3 years so we set up some picket lines there and a cook shack and got things in shape and in fact did go in there the first day. You see from the time we lost the Scofield Ranch on the Santa Barbara side and that goes back quite a few years now, we had not started from Santa Barbara for 15 or 20 years. Homes were being built there. We moved out of there and went into the Tajiguas that is up the coast about 5 or 6 miles east of Gaviota Pass. It was a long canyon and the only problem was that if we got a north wind and we did, the road out of there was steeper and longer that the Rattlesnake Canyon ride, because it went right up the face of that mountain, but one time one of the men who came in there with a team and stagecoach, he went the fire trail with us and his team and when he got to the tip it was very steep and some of these cowhands like Jerry Ranotti and Ray Cornelius got their lariats out and got around the axel and held that thing back from sliding up on the horses. So for a couple of years we were there and then part of that ride was to camp on the mountain at El Capitan, well we hit bad weather. The plan was to go to El Capitan and to stay there overnight and all the next day and the following night and come down on this side to the Juan y Lolita. We had the most miserable weather we have experienced anywhere in one day it rained and sleeted, snowed. We did have the horse show in the snow.

PL: Do you remember the year this happened?

Doran: No, not off hand. Then we went back the same way and it was the same, cold and miserable. The next year was just as bad with one night stop. Something about that its 3200 feet high and it seems to attract every dismal cloud in the country.

We have not been back since, we sold that property. And acquired other property.

This book is full of pictures, we tried to make it as colorful as possible, riding into the missions. One day I remember they suggested that each camp carry its own flag and get as many flags from as many states as we could so I went somewhere and bought a flag from the state of Alaska. Almost everybody coming into Santa Ynez was carrying a flag and it was very colorful coming up the river. Its a matter of three miles up the river but after the 1969 flood its very rocky there. Pete Jackson who owns the Alisal built a racetrack down there and some training stables and feed barns right along the river and the whole thing was washed out, only one building left standing. Now the river bed is half a mile wide and we come across on the diagonal so that it rocky going. I wonder if we could close this interview with these lines from the Rancheros book, "For those who have gone before, after 12 long months we're here again, jolly good fellows all of you men. You've taken your leave of troubles and cares to find your fun in the open air, you've ridden the trails with the pals you love, you've bedded down with the stars above, you've drunk your toasts and had your fun but now the trip is nearly done but before we leave for other parts in the sign of language of our hearts lets all stand up and face the west, paying tribute to Rancheros in final rest."

PL: Thank you, Mr. Doran for this interview on the Rancheros